MEMOIRS OF CHILDHOOD & YOUTH

ALBERT SCHWEITZER

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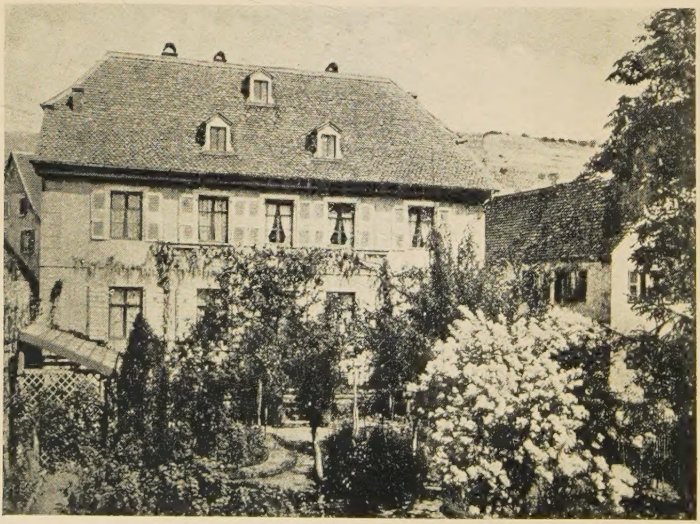

THE MANSE, GÜNSBACH

MEMOIRS OF CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

BY

ALBERT SCHWEITZER

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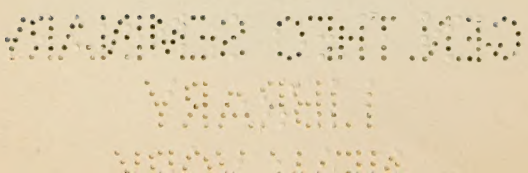

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS	7
II.	HOME AND HOLIDAYS	28
III.	EDUCATION: SECOND STAGE	46
IV.	LATER EDUCATION	70
V.	RETROSPECT AND REFLECTIONS	87

Memoirs of Childhood and Youth

CHAPTER I

EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS

I WAS born in the little town of Kaysersberg, in Upper Alsace, on January 14, 1875, in the small house with the turret, which you see on the left as you leave the upper end of the town. My father lived there as pastor, and teacher of the little evangelical congregation, for the majority of the inhabitants were Catholics. Since Alsace became French there has been no pastor, and our little home with the turret now houses the police. I was the second child, following a sister who was my elder by a year.

It was from Kaysersberg that a famous mediæval preacher took his surname, viz. Geiler von Kaysersberg (1445–1510) who used to preach in Strassburg Cathedral. He was born at Schaffhausen, in

Switzerland, but after his father's death was brought up in Kaysersberg by his grandfather, and when a boy I used to pride myself not a little on having been born in the town where Geiler von Kaysersberg had lived, and in a famous wine-year, for the season of 1875 was an extraordinarily good one for the vines.

When I was six months old my father left Kaysersberg and settled at Günsbach, in the Münstertal, as pastor. This was my mother's home-district, for she was the daughter of Pastor Schillinger, of Mühlbach, higher up the valley.

I was a very sickly child when we moved to Günsbach. On the occasion of my father's induction my mother had decked me out as finely as she could in a white frock with coloured ribbons, but not one of the pastors' wives that had come to the ceremony ventured to compliment her on her thin and yellow-faced baby, and none of them went beyond embarrassed commonplaces. So at last my mother—she has often told me about it—could restrain herself no longer: she fled with me in her arms to her bedroom, and there wept hot tears over me.

On one occasion they actually thought I was dead, but the milk from neighbour Leopold's cow, together with the excellent Günsbach air, worked

wonders for me; from my second year onwards I improved marvellously, and became a strong and healthy boy, and in the manse at Günsbach I passed a delightful childhood with the companionship of three sisters and one brother. A sixth child, a daughter named Emma, was lost to my parents by a premature death.

My first recollection is of seeing the devil! As soon as I was three or four years old, I was allowed to go to church every Sunday, and I used to look forward to this the whole week through. I can still feel on my lips our servant-girl's cotton glove, which she used to hold over my mouth when I yawned or sang too loud. And now every Sunday I noticed in a bright frame by the side of the organ a shaggy face which was continually turning about and looking down into the church. So long as the organ was playing and the singing going on it was visible, but as soon as my father was praying at the altar it disappeared. When the playing and singing began again it reappeared, but as soon as my father began his sermon it was again lost to sight, to show itself once more for the closing hymn and voluntary. "This is the devil that is looking down into the church," I said to myself, "but as soon as father begins with God's Word, he has to make himself scarce!" This weekly dose of visible

theology gave quite a distinctive tone to my childish piety. It was only much later, when I had been at school a fairly long time, that I understood that the face which came and disappeared so strangely was that of Daddy Iltis, the organist, and was created by the mirror which was fastened up near the organ so as to let the player see when my father was at the altar and when he went up into the pulpit.

There was another incident of my earliest childhood which I remember as the first occasion on which I consciously, and on account of my own conduct, felt ashamed of myself. I was still in petticoats, and was sitting on a stool in the yard while my father was busy about the beehives. Suddenly a pretty little creature settled on my hand, and I watched it with delight as it crawled about. Then all at once I began to shriek. The pretty little creature was a bee, which had a good right to be angry when the pastor was robbing him of the honey-filled combs in his hive, and to sting the robber's little son in revenge ! My cries brought the whole household round me, and everyone pitied me. The servant-girl took me in her arms and tried to comfort me with kisses, while my mother reproached my father for beginning to work at the hives without first putting me in a place of safety. My misfortune having made me so interesting an object, I went

on crying with much satisfaction, till I suddenly noticed that, although the tears were still pouring down, the pain had disappeared. My conscience told me to stop, but in order to be interesting a bit longer I went on with my lamentations, so getting a lot more comforting than I really needed. However, this made me feel such a little rogue that I was miserable over it all the rest of the day. How often in after life, when assailed by temptation, has this experience warned me against exaggerating, or making too much of, whatever has happened to me!

The Sacristan.

The terror of my childhood was the sacristan and grave-digger, Jägle. Every Sunday morning, when he had rung the bells and came to the manse to learn the numbers of the hymns that were to be sung and to get the things needed for baptisms, he would make a grab at my forehead, and say, "Yes, the horns are growing!" These horns were my bugbear. I had, as a matter of fact, two rather prominent lumps on my forehead, and these had filled me with most unpleasant thoughts ever since I had seen in the Bible a picture of Moses with horns. How the sacristan had learnt about my worry I

do not know, but he knew of it and fanned its flame. When he was at the door on Sundays, wiping his feet before he rang the bell, I longed to run away, but he had me in his power, as a snake has the fascinated rabbit. I simply could do nothing but to go to meet him, feel his hand on my forehead, and listen submissively to the fatal declaration. But when I had carried this worry about with me for something like a year, I drew my father's attention to the passage about the horns of Moses, and learnt from him that Moses was the only man who had ever had horns, so after that I had nothing more to be afraid of.

When the sacristan found that I had escaped his power, he invented a new trick, and began to tell me about soldiering. "Now we belong to Prussia," [1] he said, "and in Prussia everybody has to be a soldier, and soldiers wear clothes made of iron. In a couple of years you'll have to go up the street to the blacksmith, and let him measure you for a suit of these iron clothes." After that I took every opportunity I could of waiting about in front of the blacksmith's shop to see whether any soldiers ever came to be measured for these iron clothes,

[1] Alsace and Lorraine had become part of Germany in February, 1871, by the Treaty of Frankfort, which ended the Franco-Prussian War.

but none ever came; there were only horses and donkeys who wanted shoeing. Somewhat later, when my mother and I were standing one day before the picture of a cuirassier, I asked her what was the real truth about the soldiers and their iron suits, and was much comforted by learning that common soldiers wore cloth uniforms, and that I should be a common soldier.

The sacristan was an old soldier who had served in the Crimea, and belonged to the class of dry humourists, a specimen of whom has never from time immemorial been lacking in Günsbach. He tried to educate me into understanding humour, but his school was rather too hard a one for me. As sacristan and grave-digger he was extremely dignified, and he walked about the church with a perfectly majestic gait. Moreover, he had made a name for himself as an oddity. One morning during the hay-making time he was just going off to the fields with his rake when a man came to report that his father was dead, and to secure a plot for his grave, and Jägle received him with the words: "Why, anybody might come and say his father was dead!" One Sunday evening, in the middle of summer, as we were passing his house, he came to my father, almost with tears in his eyes, and poured out to him the story of his calf. He had

reared a beautiful calf, he said, which would follow him about like a dog. At the beginning of summer he had sent it up to the hill pastures, and that very day he had gone up to visit it. But the calf knew him no more! He was for it merely a man, just like any other man, and the ingratitude had wounded him severely; the calf should never come back into his shippon. He did, in fact, sell it not long afterwards.

* * *

Going to School.

I did not look forward to going to school. When on a fine October day my father for the first time put a slate under my arm and led me away to the school-mistress, I cried the whole way there, for I suspected that an end had now come to my dreams and my glorious freedom. In later life, too, my expectations have never got blinded by the rosy hue in which the New often presents itself: it has always been without illusions that I have entered on the Unknown.

A great impression was made on me by the first visit of the inspector, and that not because the

mistress's hands shook with excitement when she handed him the lesson-book, and Daddy Iltis, who usually looked so stern, kept bowing and smiling the whole time. No, what impressed me was the fact that for the first time I was actually setting eyes on a man who had written a book! It was his name—Steinert—which was on the title-page of the middle standard's green reading-book and of the upper standard's yellow one, and now I had in bodily presence before me the author of these two books, which to me were lower in rank than the Bible alone. His exterior, indeed, was not imposing; he was small, bald-headed, red-nosed, had a big stomach, and was enveloped in a grey suit, but to my eyes he had a halo round him, for he was a man who had written a book! It was to me incomprehensible that the master and the mistress could be talking with him just as they would be with any ordinary mortal.

On this, my first meeting with an author, there followed a second and greater experience. A Jew from a neighbouring village, Mausche by name, who dealt in land and cattle, used to come occasionally through Günsbach with his donkey-cart. As there was at that time no Jew living in the village, this was always something of an event for the boys; they used to run after him and jeer at him. One

day, in order to announce to the world that I was beginning to feel myself grown up, I could not help joining them, although I did not really understand what it all meant, so I ran along with the rest behind him and his donkey-cart, shouting: "Mausche, Mausche!" The most daring of them used to fold the corner of their shirt or jacket to look like a pig's ear, and spring with that as close to him as they could. In this way we followed him out of the village as far as the bridge, but Mausche, with his freckles and his grey beard, drove on as unperturbed as his donkey, except that he several times turned round and looked at us with an embarrassed but good-natured smile. This smile overpowered me. From Mausche it was that I first learnt what it means to keep silent under persecution, and he thus gave me a most valuable lesson. From that day forward I used to greet him politely, and later, when I was in the secondary school (the Gymnasium) I made it my practice to shake hands and walk a little way along with him, though he never learnt what he really was to me. He had the reputation of being a usurer and a property-jobber, but I never tried to find out whether this was true or not. To me he has always been just "Mausche" with the tolerant smile, the smile which even to-day compels me

to be patient when I should like to rage and storm.

* * *

With the Village Boys.

I never looked for trouble by being aggressive, but I liked measuring my bodily strength with that of others in a friendly tussle. One day on the way home from school I had a wrestle with George Nitschelm—he is now underground—who was bigger than I, and was supposed to be stronger, but I got him down. While he was lying under me, he jerked out, " Yes, if I got broth to eat twice a week, as you do, I should be as strong as you are ! " I staggered home, overcome by this finish to our play. George Nitschelm had, with cruel plainness, declared what I had already been obliged to feel on other occasions : the village boys did not accept me as one of themselves. I was to them one who was better off than they were, the parson's son, a sprig of the gentry. The certainty of this caused me much suffering, for I wanted to be exactly like them, and not a bit better off. The broth became nauseous to me ; whenever I saw it steaming

on the table I could hear George Nitschelm's voice.

So I now watched most carefully to see that I did not make myself in any way different from the others. For winter wear I had been given an overcoat made out of an old one of my father's. But no village-boy wore an overcoat, and when the tailor was fitting it on and said, "By Jove, Albert, now you're a regular gentleman!" it cost me a big effort to keep back the tears. The day I was to wear it for the first time—it was for church on a Sunday morning—I refused point-blank, and there was an unpleasant scene. My father gave me a box on the ear, but that did no good. They had to take me to church without the overcoat, and every time I was expected to wear it, it was the same tale over again. What a number of times I got the stick over this new garment! But I stood firm.

That same winter my mother took me to Strassburg to visit an elderly relative, and she wished to use the visit as an opportunity for buying me a cap. In a fine big shop they tried several on me, and at last my mother and the shopwoman agreed on a handsome sailor's cap which I was to take for my own. But they had reckoned without their host. The cap displeased me altogether, because no village

boy wore a sailor's cap. When they went on pressing me to take this one or that one from among all those they had tried on me, I got into such a passion that everybody in the shop ran up to us.

" Well, what sort of a cap *do* you want, you stupid lad ? " the shopwoman shouted at me. " I won't have one of your new-fashioned ones ; I'll have one like what the village boys wear." So a shop-girl was sent out, and she brought me from the unsaleable stock a brown cap that one could pull down over one's ears. Beaming with joy, I put it on, while my poor mother had to put up with some cutting remarks and some contemptuous glances on account of her young duffer. It hurt me that she had been put to shame before the townspeople on my account, but she did not scold me ; it seemed as if she suspected that there was some real reason behind it all.

This stern contest lasted all the time I was at the village school, and poisoned not only my life but that of my father too. I would only wear fingerless gloves, because the village boys wore no others, and on weekdays I would go out only in wooden clogs, because the village boys wore their leather boots only on Sundays. Every time a visitor came the contest was started afresh, for

it was my duty to present myself dressed " suitably to my station in life." Indoors, indeed, I yielded in every way, but when it was a case of going out to pay a visit dressed as a " sprig of the gentry," I was again the intolerable creature who provoked his father, and the courageous hero who put up with boxes on the ear and let himself be shut up in the cellar. And it was a real grief to me to be so perverse with my parents. My sister Louise, who was a year older than I, had some understanding of what my ideas really were, and she was quite sympathetic.

The village boys never knew what I went through on their account ; they accepted without emotion all my efforts not to be in any way different from them, and then, whenever the slightest dispute arose between us, they stabbed me with the dreadful word, " sprig of the gentry."

At the Village School.

Very early in my school life I had to go through one of the hardest experiences which the school of life provides for us : a friend betrayed me. It happened in this way. When I heard the word " cripple " for the first time, I did not know exactly what to understand by it, but it seemed to me well

suited for giving expression to some specially strong dissatisfaction, and as such I stored it up for future use. A new teacher, Fräulein Goguel, had not yet won my favour, so I mentally applied to her this mysterious word. Then one day when I was acting as cowherd with my dearest friend, I confided to him with an air of mystery the secret that "Fräulein Goguel is a cripple, but don't you tell anyone." And he promised not to.

Not long after this he and I had a dispute on the way to school, and on the steps he whispered to me: "Good! now I'll tell Fräulein that you have called her a cripple." I did not take the threat seriously, because I thought such treachery was hardly possible, but during the break he did actually go up to the desk with the announcement: "Fraulein, Albert has called you a cripple!" Nothing came of it, as the teacher did not understand what the dreadful assertion meant, but I could not grasp the horror of what had happened. This first experience of treachery shattered to atoms all that I had thought or expected of life; it was weeks before I recovered from the shock. But now I knew something of life; I carried about on me now that smarting wound which it inflicts on us all, and which new blows are continually reopening. Of the blows that I have received since then, many

have been harder, but there has not been one so painful.

Before I went to school my father had already begun to teach me some music by means of an old square piano. But I did not play much from notes: my delight was to improvise, and to reproduce songs and hymn-tunes with an accompaniment of my own invention. So now when in the singing-lesson the teacher continually played the hymn-tune with one finger and no accompaniment, I found it far from pleasing, and during the interval I asked her why she did not play it properly with the harmony. Then in my enthusiasm I sat down at the harmonium and played it straight away to her out of my head, but with harmony in several parts. Then she became very friendly with me, and used to look at me in a new and unusual way, but went on herself always picking out the tunes with one finger only. Then it occurred to me that I could do something which she could not, and I was ashamed of having made a show before her of my ability, which I had till then taken as something which I possessed as a matter of course.

But for the rest I was a quiet and dreamy scholar, who found it no little trouble to learn to read and write.

One more incident comes back to me out of my first year at school. Before I began going there my father had told me many of the Bible stories, among them that of the Flood. As that summer happened to be a very wet one, I surprised him with the remark: "Why, it must have been raining here now for nearly forty days and forty nights, but the water has not yet got up to the houses, much less to the tops of the mountains!" "Yes, well at that time," he replied, "at the beginning of the world it didn't rain just in drops, but like pouring water out of buckets." This explanation cleared my ideas. So when our teacher in school told us the story of the Flood, I waited patiently as far as the point where she ought to mention the difference between the rain then and the rain now, but she passed this over altogether. Then I could restrain myself no longer. "Teacher," I called out from my place, "you must tell the story correctly," and without giving her time to tell me to keep quiet, I continued: "You must say that in those days it didn't rain in drops, but like pouring water out of buckets."

When I was eight my father, at my own request, gave me a New Testament, which I read eagerly. Among the stories which interested me most was that of the Three Wise Men from the East. What

did the parents of Jesus do, I asked myself, with the gold and other valuables which they got from these men? How could they have been poor after that? And that the Wise Men should never have troubled themselves again about the Child Jesus was to me incomprehensible. The absence, too, of any record of the shepherds of Bethlehem becoming disciples, gave me a severe shock.

Feeling for Music.

In my second school year we used to have twice a week a lesson in penmanship from the master, who just before that gave a singing-lesson to the big boys. Now it happened one day that we had come over from the infant school too early, so that we had to wait outside the other class-room, and when they began the vocal duet, "In the mill by the stream below there I was sitting in quiet thought," followed by "Beautiful forest, who planted you there?" I had to hold on to the wall to prevent myself from falling. The charm of the two-part harmony of the songs thrilled me all over, to my very marrow, and similarly the first time I heard brass instruments playing together I almost fainted from excess of pleasure. Violin music, however, with its different

quality of tone, I did not find beautiful, and I only got to like it gradually.

Bicycles.

While I was at the village school I witnessed the first introduction of the bicycle. We had several times heard how carters and waggon-drivers were up in arms against people who rushed about on high wheels and frightened the horses. But one morning, while we were playing in the school-yard during the break, the news came that one of these "racers" had dismounted at the inn in our village street. School and everything else forgotten, we raced there, and stood gaping at the high wheel which was standing outside. There were a good many grown-ups there too, who waited with us till the traveller had finished his glass of wine. Out he came at last, and everybody burst out laughing on seeing a grown-up man in knickerbockers. Then in a moment he was seated on his wheel and rode off.

Not long after the high-wheelers, about the middle of the 'eighties, came the smaller-wheeled ones, the so-called "kangaroo" type, and soon after them the first "safety" bicycles. The first riders, however, who appeared on these last were jeered at

for not having courage enough to mount the high wheels.

In my penultimate year at the Gymnasium I obtained what I had long been yearning for—a bicycle of my own. The purchase-money I had earned in the course of the previous eighteen months by giving mathematical lessons to backward scholars. It was a second-hand machine, and cost me 230 marks (£11 10s.). At that time it was not considered proper for parsons' sons to ride a bicycle, but my father was fortunately above yielding to such a prejudice. There were not wanting, however, voices to find fault with this "uppish" behaviour of his son.

The well-known Orientalist and theologian, Edward Reuss, of Strassburg, would not allow his theological students to bicycle, and when in 1893 I rode into the S. Thomas's Institute on my bicycle, the Director, Erichson, remarked that he could only allow this because Professor Reuss was dead.

Young people of to-day can hardly imagine what the introduction of the bicycle meant for us. It opened to us possibilities, undreamt of hitherto, of getting into touch with nature, and I used them freely and with delight.

Besides the first bicycles I remember, too, the first tomatoes. I must have been about six years

old when neighbour Leopold brought us, as a great novelty, some of these red things which he had grown in his garden. The present was a somewhat embarrassing one for my mother as she did not know at all how to cook them. When the red sauce came to table, it found so little acceptance that most of it was consigned to the swill-tub. It was not till the end of the 'eighties that tomatoes found themselves really at home in Alsace.

CHAPTER II

HOME AND HOLIDAYS

Christmas Presents.

My father's study was a most uncomfortable place, and I never set foot inside it unless I was absolutely compelled to. The smell of books which pervaded it took my breath away, and that my father should always be at the table studying and writing seemed to me something terribly unnatural. I could not understand how he endured it, and I vowed that I would never become a student and writer like him. I felt a little more sympathy with his spells of sitting and writing when I was scholar enough to feel the charm of his *Village Tales*, which appeared in print in the *Kirchbote* (the *Church Messenger*) and in calendars. His literary model was Jeremiah Gotthelf, the Swiss pastor, so well known as an author, but he was more cautious than Gotthelf. He carefully avoided describing the people who had been his models for the different characters so exactly that they could be recognized.

Once a year, however, I was obliged to see the inside of the study; that was between Christmas and New Year's Day. A day came on which after breakfast father made the announcement: "To-day we'll get the letters written. You accept the Christmas presents, but when it comes to writing letters of thanks for them, you are too lazy. Set to work, then, and don't let me see any sulky faces!"

Oh, those hours when I sat with my sisters in the study, breathing the book-laden air, listening to my father's pen scratching the paper, but away in spirit with my schoolboy friends, who were whizzing down the road behind the church on their sledges, while I had to indite letters to uncles, aunts, godparents, and other givers of Christmas presents! And what letters! Never in all my life since then have I had to face such a task for my pen! All the letters had, of course, the same content, and fell naturally into three sections: (1) thanks for the present received from that particular addressee, with the assurance that I liked it more than all the rest; (2) a list of all the presents received; (3) good wishes for the New Year. Yet with just this same content each letter had to be different from the others, while in every one of them the appalling difficulty reared its head of

finding a neat transition from the list of presents to the good wishes. Of the need of bringing in at the end of each the complimentary remark which best fitted that particular recipient—of that I will say nothing!

There had to be first a rough copy of each letter, which was shown to father. Then came the improving of it, or perhaps the re-writing, and finally the copying of it on a proper sheet of paper without either mistake or blot. Dinner-time often came before I had thrown off even one of the six or seven that had to be composed! For years I used to salt with my tears the meals between Christmas and the New Year, and once I began to cry on Christmas Day itself, directly after the distribution of the presents, at the thought of the inevitable letters which would have to be written!

My sister, Louisa, was much quicker than I at getting each letter written differently, and at finding for each one a new transition from the list to the good wishes. Never has anyone so roused me to admiration of his or her epistolary cleverness as she did!

This horror of studies, and letter-writing, which I acquired in childhood through having to write these letters of thanks lasted for years. Meanwhile circumstances have brought me into a position

in which I have to maintain an unusually extensive correspondence, but I have not yet learnt how to compose letters in which one has at the end to make a neat transition to good wishes for the New Year. Therefore, whenever I have, as uncle or godfather, to make a Christmas present, I always forbid the recipients to write and thank me; they shall not, between Christmas and the New Year, salt their soup with their tears as I did! Even to-day I do not feel quite comfortable in my father's study.

But the week after Christmas was the only time when father was strict with us; at other times he left us as much freedom as is good for children, and we knew how to appreciate his kindness to us, and we are deeply grateful to him for it. In the summer holidays he used to go with us two or three times a week to spend a whole day on the hills, and thus we grew up like a bunch of wild roses.

In my third year at school I went up into the "big school" under Daddy Iltis. He was a good teacher, and without exerting myself I learnt a good deal with him.

All my life I have been glad that I began in the village school. It was a good thing for me that in the process of learning I had to measure myself with the village boys, and thus make it quite clear to myself that they had at least as much in their

heads as I had in mine. I was never a victim of that ignorance which afflicts so many of the boys who go straight to a Gymnasium, and there tell each other that the children of the educated classes have more in them than the lads who go to school in darned stockings and wooden clogs. Even to-day if I meet any of my old schoolfellows in the village or on a farm, I at once remember vividly the points in which I did not reach their level. One was better at mental arithmetic ; another made fewer mistakes in his dictation ; a third never forgot a date ; another was always top in geography ; another—I mean you, Fritz Schöppeler—wrote almost better than the school-master. Even to-day they still stand in my mind for the subjects in which they were at that time superior to me.

* * *

Love of Nature.

When nine years old I began going to the Real-schule (a " modern side " school in which no Greek is taught) at Münster, and had every morning and evening a walk of nearly two miles over the hills. This walk it was my delight to take by myself,

without any of the other boys who also went to school at Münster, so as to indulge my thoughts. How with these walks I did enjoy autumn, winter, spring, and summer! When it was decided during the holidays in 1885 that I should go to the Gymnasium at Mülhausen, in Upper Alsace, I cried over my lot in secret for hours together. I felt as if I were being torn away from Nature.

To the enthusiasm roused in me by the beauties of nature as I learnt to know them on my walks to and from Münster, I tried to give expression in poetry, but I never got further than the first two or three rimes. Once or twice, too, I tried to sketch the hill with the old castle on it which rose on the other side of the valley, but that, too, was a failure. After that I devoted myself to the enjoyment of beauty simply through the eyes without trying to reproduce it in any way, and since then I have never again tried either to draw it or to poetize about it. Only in musical improvisation have I ever felt myself—as I do still—to have any creative ability.

Character.

The religious instruction in the Realschule was given by Pastor Schäffler, an outstanding religious

personality, and, in his own way, an orator quite above the average. He could tell the Bible stories with entrancing effect, and I still remember how he wept as he sat at the desk, and how we on the forms sobbed, over Joseph's making himself known to his brethren. He fastened on me the nickname "Isaac," which means "the Laugher." I suffered, in truth, from the peculiarity of being very easily made to laugh, a weakness which my schoolfellows exploited mercilessly during the lessons. How often there appeared in the register the words: "Schweitzer is laughing!" And yet I was by no means a merry character; I was, on the contrary, shy and reserved.

This reserve I had inherited from my mother; we did not possess the faculty of expressing in words the affection we had for each other, and I can count on my fingers the hours in which we really talked to each other heart to heart. But we understood each other without using words.

From my mother I also inherited a terribly passionate temper, which she again had inherited from her father, who was a very good man but very quick-tempered. My disposition showed itself in games; I played every game with terrible earnestness, and got angry if anyone else did not enter into it with all his might. When I was nine or

ten years old I struck my sister Adela, because she was a very slack opponent in a game, and through her indifference let me win a very easy victory. From that time onwards I began to feel anxious about my passion for play, and gradually gave up all games. I have never ventured to touch a playing-card. I also, on January 1, 1899, when I was a student, gave up for ever the use of tobacco.

I have had to struggle very hard against this passionate temper. During and since my childhood I have done many things the memory of which humiliates me, and keeps me watchful in the fight.

My Maternal Grandfather.

My grandfather Schillinger, whom I never knew, had been an enthusiast for enlightenment; he was filled with the spirit of the eighteenth century. After service he used to tell the people, who waited for him in the street, the political news, and also make them acquainted with the latest discoveries of the human mind. If there was anything special to be seen in the sky, he would in the evening set up his telescope in front of the house and let anyone who liked look through it.

As the Catholic vicar was also under the influence of the spirit of the eighteenth century, and its

tolerance, the two ministers lived in their respective residences in brotherly union. If one had more visitors than he could take in, he found a bed for one in the other house. If one went off for a holiday, it followed that the other visited the sick members of his congregation in order that they might not be left without any spiritual ministrations. When on Easter morning the Catholic vicar had finished his Masses and went home for a good Easter meal, my grandfather would open his window and wish him joy at having reached the end of his fast.

One night there was a big fire in the village. As the evangelical manse seemed threatened, they brought its contents out and housed them in the vicarage, whereby it happened that my grandmother's crinolines got set up in the Catholic vicar's bedroom, and were brought from there back into the manse the next morning.

My grandfather prepared his sermons with the utmost care. All Saturday there had to be absolute quiet in the house; no visitor was admitted that day, and his son, when he was a student, had to arrange that he never came home for a holiday on a Saturday.

He seems to have been of a somewhat imperious nature, this pastor Schillinger, and he made people

treat him with respect. It was an unheard-of thing that anyone who wanted an interview with the pastor should appear at the manse without having on a black coat and a tall hat.

Numerous anecdotes are current about him in the valley, two of them being connected with the "Tort," the traditional Münstertal meat-pasty, which he had to cut up at wedding breakfasts or baptismal parties, occasions on which the pastor always presided. On one occasion he is said to have asked whether it made any difference where he made the first cut, and when the reply came that it did, to have remarked, "Then I'll make the first cut at home." On another occasion he cut by mistake one piece too few. When the plate came back without a piece of the pasty being left for him, he said, "Well, I'm not, in truth, so very fond of it," though everyone knew how much he always enjoyed it. These and other anecdotes about pastor Schillinger are still retailed at similar festivals in the valley, and, as politeness demands, are still laughed at.

The manse in which he lived and the church in which he preached exist no longer; bombs have overturned them or shot them to pieces. A big trench was driven right through the church, but the old pastor's grave, which is close against the

church wall, has by a sort of miracle remained undamaged.

My Uncle Albert.

When I was still so young that I hardly understood what was said to me, my mother told me that I had been given the name of Albert in memory of her dead brother. This brother—or rather half-brother, a child of my grandfather's first marriage—had been pastor at the church of S. Nicholas, in Strassburg. In 1870, after the battle of Weissenburg, he had been sent to Paris to obtain a supply of drugs and similar things in view of the expected siege of the town. There instead of getting the things that were so urgently demanded by the medical men of Strassburg, he found himself sent from one office to another, and when at last he was able to make a start for home with a mere fraction of what had been asked for, the fortress was completely invested. General von Werder, who commanded the besieging army, allowed these medical supplies to be taken into the town, but kept my uncle as a prisoner. He thus had to live through the siege among the besiegers, tormented by the thought that his flock might be thinking that in that difficult time he had of his own accord left

them in the lurch. He had a weak heart, and the results of all the excitement of these months were too much for him. In the summer of 1872, while standing with a group of friends in Strassburg, he fell to the ground dead.

The thought of how I could provide, as it were, a continuation of a man whom my mother had loved so much haunted me a great deal, especially as I had heard so many stories of his kindness. When after the siege of Strassburg there was for a time a shortage of milk, he used to bring his allowance to a poor old woman, who after his death told my mother how, during that period, she had got her daily milk.

* * *

Feeling for Animal Life.

As far back as I can remember I was saddened by the amount of misery I saw in the world around me. Youth's unqualified *joie de vivre* I never really knew, and I believe that to be the case with many children, even though they appear outwardly merry and quite free from care.

One thing that specially saddened me was that

the unfortunate animals had to suffer so much pain and misery. The sight of an old limping horse, tugged forward by one man while another kept beating it with a stick to get it to the knacker's yard at Colmar, haunted me for weeks.

It was quite incomprehensible to me—this was before I began going to school—why in my evening prayers I should pray for human beings only. So when my mother had prayed with me and had kissed me good-night, I used to add silently a prayer that I had composed myself for all living creatures. It ran thus: "O, heavenly Father, protect and bless all things that have breath; guard them from all evil, and let them sleep in peace."

A deep impression was made on me by something which happened during my seventh or eighth year. Henry Bräsch and I had with strips of india-rubber made ourselves catapults, with which we could shoot small stones. It was spring and the end of Lent, when one morning Henry said to me, "Come along, let's go on to the Rebberg and shoot some birds." This was to me a terrible proposal, but I did not venture to refuse for fear he should laugh at me. We got close to a tree which was still without any leaves, and on which the birds were singing beautifully to greet the

morning, without showing the least fear of us. Then stooping like a Red Indian hunter, my companion put a bullet in the leather of his catapult and took aim. In obedience to his nod of command, I did the same, though with terrible twinges of conscience, vowing to myself that I would shoot directly he did. At that very moment the church bells began to ring, mingling their music with the songs of the birds and the sunshine. It was the Warning-bell, which began half an hour before the regular peal-ringing, and for me it was a voice from heaven. I shooed the birds away, so that they flew where they were safe from my companion's catapult, and then I fled home. And ever since then, when the Passiontide bells ring out to the leafless trees and the sunshine, I reflect with a rush of grateful emotion how on that day their music drove deep into my heart the commandment: "Thou shalt not kill."

From that day onward I took courage to emancipate myself from the fear of men, and whenever my inner convictions were at stake I let other people's opinions weigh less with me than they had done previously. I tried also to unlearn my former dread of being laughed at by my school-fellows. This early influence upon me of the commandment not to kill or to torture other creatures is the great

experience of my childhood and youth. By the side of that all others are insignificant.

While I was still going to the village school we had a dog with a light brown coat, named Phylax. Like many others of his kind, he could not endure a uniform, and always went for the postman. I was, therefore, commissioned to keep him in order whenever the postman came, for he was inclined to bite, and had already been guilty of the crime of attacking a policeman. I therefore used to take a switch and drive him into a corner of the yard, and keep him there till the postman had gone. What a feeling of pride it gave to me to stand, like a wild beast tamer, before him while he barked and showed his teeth, and to control him with blows of the switch whenever he tried to break out of the corner! But this feeling of pride did not last. When, later in the day, we sat side by side as friends, I blamed myself for having struck him; I knew that I could keep him back from the postman if I held him by his collar and stroked him. But when the fatal hour came round again I yielded once more to the pleasurable intoxication of being a wild beast tamer!

During the holidays I was allowed to act as driver for our next door neighbour. His chestnut horse was old and asthmatic, and was not allowed to trot

much, but in my pride of drivership I let myself again and again be seduced into whipping him into a trot, even though I knew and felt that he was tired. The pride of sitting behind a trotting horse infatuated me, and the man let me go on in order not to spoil my pleasure. But what was the end of the pleasure? When we got home and I noticed during the unharnessing what I had not looked at in the same way when I was in the cart, viz. how the poor animal's flanks were working, what good was it to me to look into his tired eyes and silently ask him to forgive me?

On another occasion—it was while I was at the Gymnasium, and at home for the Christmas holidays —I was driving a sledge when neighbour Löscher's dog, which was known to be vicious, ran yelping out of the house and sprang at the horse's head. I thought I was fully justified in trying to sting him up well with the whip, although it was evident that he only ran at the sledge in play. But my aim was too good; the lash caught him in the eye, and he rolled howling in the snow. His cries of pain haunted me; I could not get them out of my ears for weeks.

I have twice gone fishing with rod and line just because other boys asked me to, but this sport was soon made impossible for me by the treatment of

the worms that were put on the hook for bait, and the wrenching of the mouths of the fishes that were caught. I gave it up, and even found courage enough to dissuade other boys from going.

Respect for Life.

From experiences like these, which moved my heart and often made me feel ashamed, there slowly grew up in me an unshakeable conviction that we have no right to inflict suffering and death on another living creature unless there is some unavoidable necessity for it, and that we ought all of us to feel what a horrible thing it is to cause suffering and death out of mere thoughtlessness. And this conviction has influenced me only more and more strongly with time. I have grown more and more certain that at the bottom of our heart we all think this, and that we fail to acknowledge it and to carry our belief into practice chiefly because we are afraid of being laughed at by other people as sentimentalists, though partly also because we allow our best feelings to get blunted. But I vowed that I would never let my feelings get blunted, and that I would never be afraid of the reproach of sentimentalism.

I never go to a menagerie because I cannot endure the sight of the misery of the captive animals.

The exhibiting of trained animals I abhor. What an amount of suffering and cruel punishment the poor creatures have to endure in order to give a few moments' pleasure to men devoid of all thought and feeling for them !

CHAPTER III

EDUCATION: SECOND STAGE

At Mülhausen Gymnasium.

At Mülhausen I lived with my Uncle Louis and my Aunt Sophie, an elderly married pair who had no children. Uncle Louis was half-brother on the father's side to my grandfather, and he was also my godfather. Being so related to me he had offered to let me live with them free of cost for the whole of my time at the Gymnasium, and it was this offer which made it possible for my father to send me to one; without that the cost would have been too great. How great the benefit was which Uncle Louis and Aunt Sophie conferred upon me by thus taking me in I only realized later; at first I was conscious only of the strictness of the discipline under which I came.

My uncle was the Director of the elementary schools of Mülhausen, and had a rather gloomy official residence in the Central School near the church of the B.V.M. In earlier days, about 1855,

if I am not mistaken, he had lived for a considerable time in Naples, where he presided over the Franco-German school which the colonies of those two nations at that time maintained.

Life in my uncle's house was lived under a system of regulations which governed even small points. After dinner I had to practise till it was time to go to school again. If I got my home-work finished early, I had to go to the piano again. "You don't know what good your music mayn't be to you when you're grown up" my aunt used to say when she had to drag me to the piano. And indeed she could not have dreamed that one day my music would help me to collect the funds for starting a hospital in the primæval forest![1]

Sunday was the only time that was really devoted to recreation. Then we went for a walk, and after that I had till ten o'clock to gratify my passion for reading.

Reading.

And this passion for reading was unlimited. I have it still, and once I have begun a book I can

[1] See the writer's book, "*On the Edge of the Primæval Forest.*" (Black, 6s.)

never put it down ; I would rather sit up all night over it. I must at least skim through it, and, if it pleases me, I read it through two or three times on end.

To my aunt this " devouring of books " was a horror. She, too, had a taste for reading, but of another kind. Having once been a teacher, she read, as she used to say, " in order to enjoy the style, which is the important thing." For three hours every evening, while knitting or crotcheting, she had a book open before her, one hour before supper, two after it. If the style was particularly beautiful, the movement of her needles slowed down, like the pace of a horse when the driver is paying no attention to it. Then there often escaped her such exclamation as : " Oh, this man Daudet ! " " Oh, this Theuriot ! What a style he has ! " " How Victor Hugo can describe things ! " When she was reading Julius Stinde's *The Buchholtz Family*, she used to laugh till the tears ran down her cheeks ; nevertheless, she never spent a quarter of an hour longer over it. At half-past ten she put the marker in the place where she had stopped, and shut the book.

Thus we used to sit at the same table but with our utterly different tastes in reading, each a puzzle to the other. Anxiously concerned about

my education, my aunt would try to exercise some control each time that I got too quickly to the end of a book. Now with kindness, now with authority, now with sarcasm, she would try to wean me from my practice of "sniffing through" the books, and to convert me to a reasonable *tempo* in reading. But nothing was any good; no one can do anything in defiance of his inner nature. Her representations were the less able to shatter my determination, because I was convinced that even when one devours a book one does pay attention to the style, and indeed is the best able to distinguish what is well from what is badly written. If during my hasty perusal I succumbed to the temptation to skip a lot of sentences and long passages of description, I judged that the book was badly written. If it so entranced me that I could not help reading every sentence, I considered that the style must be good. And that is still my opinion to-day. I took care, however, not to parade my wisdom before my aunt; it was necessary to avoid irritating her on the reading question. In that matter she had me entirely in her power, for it depended on her whether I got a quarter of an hour more or a quarter of an hour less for reading.

Newspapers.

It was especially distasteful to her that from the very beginning I threw myself on the newspapers. There was at my disposal for this only the quarter of an hour when the table was being laid for supper, during which I had to interrupt my school preparaton work, but then I at once snatched up the *Strassburg Post*, the *Mülhausen Daily Mail*, and the *New Mülhausen Times*. On the alleged grounds that I read nothing but the stories in the "Literary Supplement" and the murder cases, my aunt did her best to get my newspaper reading prohibited, but I asserted that what specially interested me was the politics, that was to say, contemporary history. The dispute—I was then about eleven—came before the uncle. "We'll soon see," said he during supper, "whether the young rascal reads the political news!" And then he began to examine me as to who the ruling princes in the Balkans were, and what the names of their prime ministers. Next I had to describe to him the composition of the three last French cabinets. Finally I had to summarize to him the contents of Eugen Richter's last speech in the Reichstag. Out of this examination, with its accompaniment of baked potatoes and salad, I

came with flying colours, and thereupon the decision was given that I might read the papers not only while the table was being laid, but also when I had finished my lessons later on. This permission I naturally used to refresh my soul with the stories in the Literary Supplement, but the politics were after all the main thing, and from that time my uncle began to treat me like a grown-up person, and to talk about politics with me at meals.

This interest in public events I inherited from my mother, who was a passionate reader of newspapers. That on Boxing Day, Easter Monday, and Whitsun Monday no papers appeared was always an annoyance to her, although she was a pious woman and a staunch defender of Sunday as a day of rest. I had indeed as early as my ninth year begun to follow the events of the day with keen interest, and to live through them in thought, and now for understanding that earlier period I found very valuable all that my uncle told me.

Friends and Acquaintances.

There lived with my uncle, besides myself, a Fräulein Anna Schäffer also, a daughter of the pastor at Münster, who filled a post as teacher in

the Higher Girls' School. She, with her wise and kindly personality, contributed much more to my education than she ever suspected.

It was also a great advantage for me to go so often to the home of Edward Ostier, one of my schoolfellows, for his mother was a woman much above the average. For many years in succession Ostier spent the Whitsuntide holidays with us at Günsbach.

I was also often in the house of Pastor Matthieu, whose son, a boy of strong personality and of character somewhat out of the ordinary, was at the Gymnasium with me. He afterwards, like myself, studied theology, and went to the Higher Boys' School in Zürich, where he gave all the religious instruction. His father was an extraordinarily well-read and learned man.

I was not a frequent visitor at any houses except these two; my aunt did not look favourably on what she called "knocking about outside."

In my first years at Mülhausen I felt very much being so entirely cut off from Nature. Once, on a sunny day in March, when the last patches of snow were melting, I was sitting at table, just after four o'clock coffee when I had to begin my home lessons, and was looking with longing eyes out of the window, when my aunt, who was doing some

ironing, must have felt what was going on within me. I could hardly believe my ears when she said to me : " Come along, I'll take you for a bit of a walk." Over the canal, in which blocks of ice were still floating, we went, and up the Rebberg ; my aunt never suggested turning back, and it was quite dark when we got home. We did not talk much, but from that day onward our relations to each other were quite different. I knew now that the woman who was bringing me up so strictly, yes, sometimes with pedantic strictness, had a heart, and understood my longings.

When I was bigger I was allowed to go walks by myself on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, when there was no school. I always went up the heights which enclose the town on the south side, and looked longingly at the mountains in the neighbourhood of the Münster valley. I often used to meet an elderly man who carried his hat in his hand, and let his white hair blow about in the wind. Who it was I knew from seeing him in the pulpit : it was Adolph Ströber, the Alsatian poet, who was one of the Mülhausen pastors ; he usually took a bunch of wild flowers home with him. In the course of time he treated me as an acquaintance, and would let me walk a little by his side. To be in the company of a real, live poet

used to fill me with pride! On the Rebberg was a large garden belonging to Frau Ostier, the mother of my schoolfellow, and many a delightful hour did I spend in it!

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Music, Confirmation, Church Services.

During my first terms at Mülhausen I was by no means a model scholar, being far too much given to day-dreaming. My bad reports caused my parents much anxiety, without my finding the energy to pull myself together for better results. The free place which I had, as being a parson's son, was going to be taken from me, and my father was asked to come and see the Principal, who even hinted to him that the best course might be to take me away from the school. And I, in my dreaminess, took no account at all of the worry I was causing him! My only feeling was that of astonishment at his actually not scolding me. But he was too kind, and now too sad, to do that.

Then a saviour appeared for me in the person of a new form-master, Dr. Wehmann by name. In the course of the first few days I saw clearly

through the mist of my dreaminess this fact : our new teacher came with every lesson carefully prepared ; he knew exactly how much of the subject he wanted to take, and he got through that amount. He also gave us back our fair-copy exercise books on the proper day, and in the proper lesson hour. Experience of this self-disciplined activity had a distinct effect upon me. I should have been ashamed to incur his displeasure, and he became my model. Three months later when my form, the Quarta, got its Easter report, I was one of the better scholars, although my Christmas report had been so bad that my mother had gone about the whole of the Christmas holidays with eyes that were red from crying. When, later on, Herr Wehmann went from Mülhausen to Thann, and then to Saargemünd, and then to Strassburg, I always went to look him up ; he knew how much I owed him. After my return from Africa one of my first excursions after the end of the war was devoted to a search for him, but I did not find him. Starvation, so they told me, had brought him to a nervous breakdown, and he had taken his own life. That a deep sense of duty, manifested in even the smallest matters, is the great educative influence, and that it accomplishes what no exhortations and no punishments can, has

thanks to him, become with me a firm conviction, a conviction the truth of which I have ever tried to prove in practice in all that I have had to do as an educator.

Music Lessons.

My music-master, too, at Mülhausen found at first little pleasure in teaching me. His name was Eugen Münch, and he had just come from the High School for Music at Berlin to be organist to the Reformed Congregation at S. Stephen's. "Albert Schweitzer is my thorn in the flesh," he used to say. This was the result partly of the fact that in the hours my aunt compelled me to spend at the piano I used to play all sorts of music at sight, and to improvise, instead of learning properly the pieces he had given me, and partly of my shrinking from playing before my music-master with real feeling. I could not bring myself to display to him all that I felt while playing a beautiful piece of music, and I am sure that many music-students feel the same. Thus it was that I irritated him with my "wooden playing." But one day when, still mastered by this prejudice, I had ground out a badly practised sonata of Mozart's, he angrily opened a volume of Mendelssohn at the

Song without Words in E natural. " Really you don't deserve to have such beautiful music given you to play. You'll come and spoil this *Lied ohne Worte* for me, just like everything else. If a boy has no feeling, I certainly can't give him any ! " " Oho," thought I to myself, " I'll show you whether I have any feeling or not ! " And the whole week through I carefully practised this piece, which I had so often played by myself. I even did what no one had ever got me to do yet ; I found out by experiment the best fingering, and wrote it above the notes. In the next lesson when finger-exercises and scales were all finished, I braced myself up and played the *Lied ohne Worte* just as my very soul bade me. My teacher said little, but putting his hands firmly on my shoulders, he moved me from the piano and himself played over to me a *Lied ohne Worte* that was new to me. Next I was given a piece of Beethoven's, and a few lessons later I was found worthy to begin upon Bach. Then after a few more lessons it was disclosed to me that after my confirmation I should be allowed to have lessons on the big and beautiful organ in S. Stephen's. Thus there came to fulfilment a dream long cherished in secret, for from long, long before it had been my ambition to get to the organ. And this ambition had been born

in me. My mother's father, Pastor Schillinger of Mühlbach, had been deeply interested in organs and organ-building, and whenever he found himself in a strange town, its organs were the first things that he went to look at. When the famous organ in the Collegiate Church at Lucerne was being built, he went there and spent whole days in the chancel in order to follow the building, and to test the masterpiece of Haas, the organ-builder. He is said to have been a very fine improvisator. My father, too, possessed this gift. When a child I listened to him for hours together as he sat, in the dusk, at the old square piano which he had inherited from grandfather Schillinger, and gave rein to his imagination. But he never liked Bach's music.

Thanks to the kindness of Daddy Iltis, and because he was very glad to have a substitute, I had already, when a boy, got admitted to the use of the organ in Günsbach Church, and when I was only nine I had taken his place at it for services. But now, when I was fifteen, I was to learn the scientific use of the pedals on an organ with three keyboards and sixty-two stops under a great organist, for such Eugen Münch was! I could scarcely credit my good fortune.

When I was sixteen I was allowed to take Eugen Münch's place at services, and not long after that

I for the first time sat at the organ at a concert; my teacher trusted me to play the organ accompaniment of Brahms's *Requiem*, which he gave with the choir of the church. Then for the first time I knew the joy, which I have so often tasted since then, of letting the organ send the flood of its own special tones to mingle with the clanging music of choir and orchestra. But the fine old organ in S. Stephen's, Mülhausen, has been, alas! since the death of Eugen Münch, restored and modernized in such barbarous fashion that the marvellous tone which it then possessed has been completely lost.

Confirmation.

To be prepared for confirmation I was sent to old Pastor Wennagel, for whom I had a great respect. But to him, too, I kept myself closely shut up. I was a diligent candidate, but the good man never suspected what was stirring in my heart. His instruction was in itself excellent, but it gave no answer to a great deal of what my inner self was concerned with. How many questions I would gladly have asked him. But that was not allowed us.

On one point—on that I was quite clear—my

ideas differed from his in spite of all the respect I showed him. He wanted to make us understand that in submission to faith all reasoning must be silenced. But I was convinced—and I am so still—that the fundamental principles of Christianity have to be proved true by reasoning, and by no other method. Reason, I said to myself, is given us that we may bring everything within the range of its action, even the most exalted ideas of religion. And this certainty filled me with joy.

During the last weeks of the preparation period Pastor Wennagel used to keep a few of us back after each lesson in order to speak to us individually about confirmation. When my turn came, and he tried with affectionate questioning to learn with what thoughts and resolves I was going through the holy time, I began to hesitate, and to answer evasively. It was impossible for me, much as I liked him, to let him look right into my heart. The conversation had a sad ending; I was dismissed with coolness. Deeply troubled about me, Pastor Wennagel afterwards told my aunt that I was going through confirmation as one of the indifferent ones. In reality, however, I was during those weeks so moved by the holiness of the time that I felt almost ill. When on Palm Sunday the whole company of us walked in procession from

the vestry into the church, Eugen Münch played "Lift up your heads, O ye gates!" from Handel's *Messiah*; it was in wonderful harmony with the thoughts in my heart.

As assistant pastor at S. Nicholas's, Strassburg, I for ten years gave confirmation instruction to boys. How often, when any of them seemed indifferent, have I had to think of dear old Pastor Wennagel and myself, and remind myself that much more goes on in a child's heart than others are allowed to suspect. I also always took great pains to make the boys feel that they could come to me about anything that troubled them. Twice a week was given up to answering questions which they put to me.

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Church Services.

In my first years at Mülhausen I suffered much from a homesick longing for the church at Günsbach; I missed my father's sermons, and the services I had been familiar with all my life.

The sermons used to make a great impression on me, because I could see how much of what my

father said in the pulpit was of a piece with his own life and experience. I came to see what an effort, I might say what a struggle, it meant for him to open his heart to the people every Sunday. I still remember sermons I heard from him while I was at the village school.

But what I loved best was the afternoon service, and of these I hardly ever missed a single one when I was in Günsbach. In the deep and earnest devotion of those services the plain and homely style of my father's preaching showed its real value, and the pain of thinking that the holy day was now drawing to its close gave these services a peculiar solemnity.

From the services in which I joined as a child I have taken with me into life a feeling for what is solemn, and a need for quiet and self-recollection, without which I cannot realize the meaning of my life. I cannot, therefore, support the opinion of those who would not let children take part in grown-up people's services till they to some extent understand them. The important thing is not that they shall understand, but that they shall feel something of what is serious and solemn. The fact that the child sees his elders full of devotion, and has to feel something of their devotion himself, that is what gives the service its meaning for him.

It is to the afternoon services at Günsbach that I attribute my interest in missions. On the first Sunday of every month my father held a missionary service at which he told us about the life and work of missionaries. Once for many Sundays in succession he read us the memoirs of Mr. Casalis, a missionary to the Basutos of South Africa, which he had translated from the French for this very purpose. These made a great impression upon me.

Besides Casalis, Bartholdi the sculptor, a native of Colmar, who made the figure of Liberty which stands at the entrance to New York harbour, was one of those who turned my childish thoughts in the direction of far-off lands. On his monument to Admiral Bruat, which stands in the Champ de Mars at Colmar, is the stone figure of a negro, which is certainly one of the most expressive pieces of work that his chisel ever produced. It is a figure of herculean proportions, but the face wears an expression of thoughtful sadness which I could not forget, and every time we went to Colmar I tried to find time to go and look at it. The countenance spoke to me of the misery of the Dark Continent, and even to-day I make a pilgrimage to it when I am in Colmar.

Church Building.

In the homesick longing which I felt at Mülhausen for the Günsbach Sundays the actual building in which we worshipped played a part. The fine new Mülhausen church struck me as terribly defective, because it had no chancel. In the church at Günsbach my devotional dreams could expand and get enriched in a Catholic chancel, for the church—as I will explain—was used for their services by Catholics and Protestants alike.

When Alsace during the reign of Louis Quatorze (1643–1715) became French, that monarch, wishing to humiliate the Protestants, decreed that in every Protestant village in which there was a minority of at least seven Catholic families the chancel of the church should be given up for their exclusive use. The whole building was also to be at their disposal for services every Sunday at fixed times. Thus it came about that a number of churches in Alsace are Protestant and Catholic at the same time. In the second half of the nineteenth century the number of such churches became somewhat smaller, because many parishes decided to have a separate church built for the Catholics, but at Günsbach, as in many other places, this joint use

of the one building by both confessions has remained to the present day.

The Catholic chancel, into which I used to gaze, was to my childish imagination the *ne plus ultra* of magnificence. There was first an altar painted to look like gold, with huge bunches of artificial flowers upon it ; then tall candlesticks of metal with majestic wax candles in them ; on the wall, above the altar and between the two windows, was a pair of large gilt statues, which to me were Joseph and the Virgin Mary ; and all these objects were flooded with the light which came through the chancel windows. Then through the windows themselves one looked out over trees, roofs, clouds, and blue sky on a world, in short, which continued the chancel of the church into an infinity of distance, and was, in its turn, flooded with a kind of transfiguring glory imparted to it by the chancel. Thus my gaze wandered from the finite to the infinite, and my soul was wrapped in peace and quiet.

From these youthful recollections springs an inability to appreciate the efforts made to produce a Protestant type of church building. When I see churches in which modern architects have tried to embody the ideal of " a preacher's church," I feel a sinking at the heart. A church is much more

than a building in which one listens to sermons; it is a place for devotions, and merely as a building it ought to keep people at a devotional level. But it can never do that if in every direction the worshipper's eye is brought up short by walls. There is need of distance, of a background, which lends itself to the mood of the worshipper, so that the outward gaze can change to the inner one. The chancel, therefore, is not something exclusively Catholic; it is part of the church as a church, and if Protestant services are from their very nature defective, there is no need for the building to be so as well. The building ought to make the service a complete whole, and become as much an element in the soul's experience as the words heard, the singing, and the prayers.

Toleration.

One thing more I have taken with me into life from this little church, that was Protestant and Catholic at the same time, I mean religious tolerance. These Catholico-Protestant churches, which had their origin in the irresponsible edict of a ruler, are for me something more than a historical phenomenon. They are a symbol to show that the differences which separate churches to-day are

things which are destined ultimately to disappear. When I was still merely a child, I felt it to be something beautiful that in our village Catholics and Protestants worshipped in the same building, and my heart fills with joy to-day whenever I set foot inside it. I should like all the churches in Alsace which are still used by both confessions to remain so, as a prophecy of, and an exhortation to, a future of religious unity, upon which we must ever keep our thoughts fixed if we are really and truly Christians.

The difficulties caused by joint ownership of the church can be quite satisfactorily got over, as experience in Alsace shows, if there is goodwill on both sides, though it is true that if two rather hot-tempered shepherds of souls have to fit themselves together into the use of the same House of God, it may happen that the community of rights, instead of contributing to unity, provides matter for quarrels. That was the case once in the eighteenth century in a village in Lower Alsace, where on a Whitsun Monday the pastor preached in the nave while the priest said mass in the chancel, because they had not been able to agree as to the times of their respective services.

The Günsbach altar, the gilded magnificence of which used once to strike me with awe, is no longer

there. Thanks to the reforming zeal of an art-loving priest from Münster it has had to give way to a high altar which has some "style" about it. The Virgin and Joseph, having got hidden by the new erection, stand no longer flooded with light between the chancel windows, but have been relegated to the side walls. Instead of looking down over the whole church with an air of benediction, they stand on opposite sides and stare into each other's faces. The Virgin, too, is no longer resplendent with glittering gilt, but has had to comply with the demands of the new style, and wear a dress of blue, green, and red.

Now when I go and sit in Günsbach Church, I shut my eyes in order to see the choir again in that homely magnificence which once so enchanted me. As my mind's gaze lingers in the past, I can see again in their places figures which were once there in the flesh, but are there no more, because they have been carried out into the churchyard. And the remembrance of the departed who once worshipped with us is for me one of the most heart-gripping parts of the services in the village church of my home. How solemnly they sat there: the men all in black, the women in their simple Münstertal costume; much more solemn in dress, in behaviour, and in character than we of the new generation!

One of these old folk, Mitschi by name, was so deaf that he could not hear a word of the sermon. Yet there he was in his place every Sunday. Once when my father expressed his regret that he had to take part in the service without being able to hear anything, Mitschi shook his head with a smile and said: "The Communion of Saints, Herr Pfarrer, the Communion of Saints!"

CHAPTER IV

LATER EDUCATION

As soon as, thanks to Dr. Wehmann, I had given up my day-dreaming, I continued to be a fairly good scholar, without rising to sit among the best. It was for history alone that I had any real ability: in languages and mathematics my attainments did but correspond to the amount of industry that I applied to them. But history I mastered without any effort, a result for which I had partly to thank my passion for reading, which, as time went on, had gradually concentrated itself on historical works. It was fortunate for me that Professor Kaufmann, who taught us history, was a distinguished original worker in his subject, and in the higher forms he treated me more like a friend than like a pupil. I remained in constant communication with him till his death.

Science.

After history it was the lessons in science which took the strongest hold of me. We had in Dr.

Förster an excellent teacher, though it is true that in Physics and Chemistry he was in no way distinguished. His special subject was Geology, and he once obtained a long leave of absence in order to carry out some geological investigations in (I think) Sumatra. When he worked out chemical or physical formulæ on the blackboard, it was easy to see that he had learnt them up himself for the lesson. That, however, did not diminish his authority with us; his teaching was good because he had prepared it well. Unfortunately the number of lesson-hours devoted to science was at that time far too small.

The science teaching had something peculiarly stimulating for me. I could not get rid of the feeling that it was never made clear to us how little we really understand of the processes of Nature. For the scientific school-books I felt a positive hatred. Their confident explanations—carefully shaped and trimmed with a view to being learnt by heart, and, as I soon observed, already somewhat out of date—satisfied me in no respect. It seemed to me laughable that the wind, the rain, the snow, the hail, the formation of clouds, the spontaneous combustion of hay, the trade-winds, the Gulf Stream, thunder and lightning, should all have found their proper explanation. The formation of drops of

rain, of snow-flakes, and of hailstones had always been a special puzzle to me. It hurt me to think that we never acknowledge the absolutely mysterious character of Nature, but always speak so confidently of explaining her, whereas all that we have really done is to go into fuller and more complicated descriptions, which only make the mysterious more mysterious than ever. Even at that age, it became clear to me that what we label Force or "Life" remains in its own essential nature for ever inexplicable.

Thus I fell gradually into a new habit of dreaming about the thousand and one miracles that surround us, though fortunately the new habit did not, like my earlier thoughtless day-dreams, prevent me from working properly. The habit, however, is with me still, and gets stronger. If during a meal I catch sight of the light broken up in a glass jug of water into the colours of the spectrum, I can at once become oblivious of everything around me, and unable to withdraw my gaze from the spectacle.

Thus did love for history and love for science go hand in hand, and I gradually recognised that the historical process too is full of riddles, and that we must abandon for ever the hope of really understanding the past. In this department also, all

that our faculties allow us to do is to produce more or less thorough descriptions.

Literature.

From my first school year to my last I found intolerable those lesson-hours in which poems were taken and treated. That a poem should be brought nearer to me by being explained I felt to be something hateful and silly. The talk about it did nothing but destroy in me the feeling of being possessed by the work of the poet. A poem, I felt, and so I feel still, does not need to be explained; it must be felt, be experienced. Consequently in these lessons I was a very inattentive scholar, yes, even a scholar in opposition. Instead of following the lesson, I read here, there, and everywhere in the reading-book, and intoxicated myself, without a guide, in those poems and extracts which I found most attractive. I had a feeling of having shut my shop-windows so as to keep out the noise in the streets.

Homer left me cold. We were driven to a feeling of positive disgust for him by being expected to know the names of the parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins of all the heroes, gods, and goddesses who appear in the poems. And

genealogies and relationships were never my strong point!

* * *

My "Puppy" Stage. Love of Discussion.

Between my fourteenth and sixteenth years I passed through an unpleasant phase of development, becoming an intolerable nuisance to everybody, especially to my father, through a passion for discussion. On everyone who met me in the street I wanted to inflict thorough-going and closely reasoned considerations on all the questions that were then being generally discussed, in order to expose the errors of the conventional views and get the correct view recognised and appreciated. The joy of seeking for what was true and serviceable had come upon me like a kind of intoxication, and every conversation in which I took part had to go back to fundamentals. Thus I emerged from the shell of reserve in which I had hitherto concealed myself, and became the disturber of every conversation which was meant to be merely conversation. What a number of times at both Mülhausen and Günsbach, did I bring the conversation at meals into stormy

water! My aunt scolded me as being insolent, because I wanted to argue out my ideas with grown-up people as though they were of my own age. If we went to pay a visit anywhere, I had to promise my father not to spoil the day for him by "stupid behaviour during conversations."

I must confess to having been as intolerable as a well-brought up young man, half-way through his education, ever can be, but it was not in the least any egotistic disputatiousness which made me so; it was a passionate need of thinking, and of seeking with the help of others for the true and the serviceable. The light and truth-seeking spirit of my grandfather Schillinger had awoke in me. The conviction that human progress is possible only if reasoned thought replaces mere opinion and absence of thought had seized hold of me, and its first manifestations made themselves felt in this stormy and disagreeable fashion.

However, this unpleasant fermentation worked itself off and left the wine clear, though I have remained essentially what I then became. I have always felt clearly that if I were to surrender my enthusiasm for the true and the serviceable, as recognised by means of thought, I should be surrendering my very self. I am, therefore, essentially as intolerable as ever, only I try as well as I can to

reconcile that disposition with the claims of conventional manners, so as not to annoy other people. Bowing to these claims, I force myself to take part in conversations which are merely conversations, and to listen to empty, unthinking chatter without rebelling against them. My innate reserve has in this matter helped me to adopt as my own this usual behaviour of the well-bred.

But how often do I inwardly rebel! How much I suffer from the way we spend so much of our time uselessly instead of talking in serious-wise about serious things, and getting to know each other well as hoping and believing, striving and suffering mortals! I often feel it to be absolutely wrong to sit like that with a mask on, so to say. Many a time I ask myself how far we can carry this good breeding without harm to our veracity.

If I meet people to whom it is possible to open oneself out as a man who thinks, I feel a passionate enjoyment in their society as if I were as young as ever, and if I stumble on a young man who is ready for serious discussion, I give myself up to a joyous exchange of cut and thrust which makes the difference between our ages, whether for good or ill, a thing of no account.

Influence of Wilhelm Deecke.

The deepest impressions I received while still at the Gymnasium were from its Principal, Wilhelm Deecke, who came to Mülhausen just as I got into the higher forms. His somewhat stiff manner—he was a native of Lübeck—prevented us at first from feeling at our ease with him, but we soon got accustomed to it. He was a schoolmaster quite above the average, a scholar of wide culture, and a man of serious purpose: we felt that his object was not merely to make us learn, but to educate us to be men. We knew in a dim way that he had incurred the displeasure of the Governor, General von Mantesffel, through some over-candid expressions of his views, and had had to pay for it by being reduced to a lower grade. His position at the Gymnasium at Mülhausen was in reality a kind of banishment for him. That in spite of this he was always cheerful, and gave us his very best in the lessons, though he had so many much higher matters in his head, filled us with astonishment. He was for us a Stoic in modern dress. That among his friends were Geibel, the poet, Mommsen the historian, and other notabilities, while he himself was an authority on early Greek inscriptions and on Etruscan archæology, made us feel still more

respect for him. He used to spice the lessons for us by going off into discursive interludes which introduced us to any sort of object or question which had any connexion with the subject-matter of the lesson. Quite unforgettable are the lessons in which he read Plato with us, and so gave us a general introduction to philosophy. His favourite philosopher was Arthur Schopenhauer.

A short time after we had left the Gymnasium, and just as the authorities were preparing to let justice be done to him again, he died of cancer of the stomach.

* * *

Res Angusta Domi.

For a long time there lay a shadow on my youthful period, which was otherwise so sunny. With five children at the Manse there were endless money-worries, although my mother practised all sorts of economies, and I myself took a pride in making my wants as small as possible. Once in autumn when my mother volunteered the opinion that my winter suit must be too small and I must want a new one, I said that was not the case. It was, however,

the fact that I could no longer wear it, so I had to go about all the winter in my light-coloured summer suit. My aunt acquiesced, because she was all for hardening me. But to be considered by my schoolfellows as one of the " starvelings " who never had anything to spend on themselves was something which my boyish pride could only endure because it lessened my mother's worries.

In order to economise—so she told me in after days—she used vegetable fat instead of butter for cooking. In the eighties of the last century this was not prepared as faultlessly as it is nowadays, and it often left an unpleasant taste behind it. To the use of it she ascribed the fact that during that time my father was dyspeptic. He was brought lower still by rheumatism in the joints which he contracted by sleeping in a damp bed at Strassburg, and thus there came upon the home a long succession of anxious weeks and months. There comes up even now into my memory from that time a vision of my mother's eyes, so often red from weeping.

But about the time of my confirmation my father's health began to improve. This was greatly helped by a piece of good fortune that enabled us to exchange the manse, which was old, somewhat damp, and shut in on all sides by buildings, for a

new one situated in a sunny garden. This house, to which we moved at the end of the eighties, was an old one which had been restored, and fitted up in a very practical way as a dwelling-house, by Herr Adolph Müller, the son of a former pastor of Günsbach, when he retired from his professional work as an engineer and settled in his native village. He left it at his death to the parish for a manse. During the war the cellars with their massive walls, built about the middle of the nineteenth century, served the whole population as a place of shelter from bombs.

From that time my father became with advancing age more and more vigorous. As a man of seventy he looked after his flock during the war under the fire of the enemy's guns, and to-day, well on in the seventies, he is approaching the fiftieth year of his ministry in Günsbach. My mother was during the war knocked down and killed by army horses on the road between Günsbach and Weier in the Münstertal.

As time went on we were saved from the worst of our money-worries, for a distant relative of my mother's, who had no children, left us her small fortune, and during my last years at school there was again unclouded sunshine over my home. We were all in good health, and lived in the closest

harmony together. The relations between parents and children were ideal, thanks to the wise understanding with which the former treated us, even in our follies. . . . They trained us for freedom. Never, after I had abandoned my unfortunate disputatiousness, was there in our home any tension between the father and his grown-up son, that thing which spoils the happiness of so many families. . . . My father was my dearest friend.

We felt it as a special kindness of our parents that they allowed us to bring home with us in the holidays some of our school-friends till the house was full. How my mother could get through the work that was thus caused is still a mystery to me!

The Right to Happiness.

The thought that I had been granted such a specially happy youth was ever in my mind; I felt it even as something oppressive, and ever more clearly there presented itself to me the question whether this happiness was a thing that I might accept as a matter of course. Here, then, was the second great experience of my life, viz. this question about the right to happiness. As an experience it joined itself to that other one which had accompanied

me from my childhood up; I mean my deep sympathy with the pain which prevails in the world around us. These two experiences slowly melted into one another, and thence came definiteness to my interpretation of life as a whole, and a decision as to the future of my own life in particular.

It became steadily clearer to me that I had not the inward right to take as a matter of course my happy youth, my good health, and my power of work. Out of the depths of my feeling of happiness there grew up gradually within me an understanding of the saying of Jesus that we must not treat our lives as being for ourselves alone. Whoever is spared personal pain must feel himself called to help in diminishing the pain of others. We must all carry our share of the misery which lies upon the world. Darkly and confusedly this thought worked in me, and sometimes it left me, so that I breathed freely and fancied once more that I was to become completely the lord of my own life. But the little cloud had risen above the horizon. I could, indeed, sometimes look away and lose sight of it, but it was growing nevertheless; slowly but unceasingly it grew, and at last it hid the whole sky.

The decision was made when I was one and twenty. In that year, while still a student, I resolved to

devote my life till I was thirty to the office of preacher, to science, and to music. If by that time I should have done what I hoped in science and music, I would take a path of immediate service as man to my fellow men. What this path should be I counted on learning from circumstances during the interval.

The idea of devoting myself to the work of medical help in the colonies was not the first form that the resolution took. This one emerged after plans for giving other kinds of help had occupied my mind, and had been given up for the most varied reasons. Finally a chain of circumstances pointed out to me the road which led to the sufferers from leprosy and sleeping-sickness in Africa.

* * *

Leaving School.

When in 1893, in my nineteenth year, I was preparing for the final examination at the Gymnasium, I was only beginning darkly to suspect that ideas were at work within me to the control of which I should one day have to submit. The claims of the immediate future were for the present

supreme. I was looking forward with joy to the life of a University student, and I boldly determined to take up as my subjects philosophy, theology, and music. My excellent health, which made it possible for me to stand the necessary night-work, did enable me to carry out this intention, but it was much harder work than I had calculated.

My leaving examination at the Gymnasium I passed satisfactorily, though not so well as people expected, and the cause of that was the trousers I wore on the occasion! I possessed a black frock-coat which I had inherited from an old relative of my mother's, but I had no black trousers. For economy's sake I would not have a pair made, but asked my uncle to let me wear his for the examination. He was much shorter than I was, and fairly stout, while I was tall and thin; however, we thought it would be all right for this one occasion. Unfortunately I omitted to try beforehand how they fitted, and when on the morning of the examination I put them on, they scarcely came down to my shoes, although I had lengthened my braces with string; moreover, between them and the waistcoat there was a yawning gap. How they fitted me behind I refrain from describing!

My appearance among my fellow-examinands produced unrestrained merriment. They turned

me round and round so that they might look at every side of me, and our solemn entry into the examination room was anything but *comme il faut*, because we could not control our laughter. When our masters at the table saw the trousers, they too were amused, though the stern School Commissioner from Strassburg—his name was Albrecht—who was to preside, failed to see what it was all about. All he could see was that I was the cause of the ill-timed merriment, and he made some severe remarks on our irreverent behaviour in general and on myself in particular. In order to take down the conceit of the supposed buffoon, he undertook to examine me himself in all the subjects except in mathematics, of which he confessedly knew nothing. He gave me a hard time. Some friendly looks from the Principal encouraged me, and I did my best, but many of the questions from my stern *vis-à-vis* got no answer, and again and again he shook his solemn head. He was especially annoyed that I was unable to give him any accurate information about the way they beached the ships, as described by Homer, and as the other candidates knew very little more about it than I did, he denounced our ignorance as a serious defect in our culture. For my part I thought it a far greater defect in our culture that we were leaving th

Gymnasium without knowing anything about astronomy or geology.

The last subject of all was history, the Commissioner's own special subject. In ten minutes he seemed a different person! His indignation melted away, and finally, instead of questioning me, he discussed with me the differences between the colonizing efforts of the Greeks and those of the Romans.

In his final address, after the announcement of the results, he mentioned the pleasure I had given him over the history, and a very real compliment, suggested by him, adorns my leaving-certificate, which was otherwise a very ordinary one. Thus everything ended satisfactorily.

It was a hard thing to say goodbye to my uncle and aunt, but they lived for a good many years after that, and I had opportunities of showing them how dear they were to me. When my uncle, from considerations of age, gave up his post at Mülhausen, they removed to Strassburg, where they rest in the S. Gallus cemetery, as does also my uncle Albert, who was preacher at S. Nicholas's Church.

CHAPTER V

RETROSPECT AND REFLECTIONS

Gratitude.

When I look back upon my early days I am stirred by the thought of the number of people whom I have to thank for what they gave me or for what they were to me. At the same time I am haunted by an oppressive consciousness of the little gratitude I really showed them while I was young. How many of them have said farewell to life without my having made clear to them what it meant to me to receive from them so much kindness or so much care! Many a time have I, with a feeling of shame, said quietly to myself over a grave the words which my mouth ought to have spoken to the departed, while he was still in the flesh.

For all that, I think I can say with truth that I am not ungrateful, I did occasionally wake up out of that youthful thoughtlessness which accepted as a matter of course all the care and kindness that I experienced from others, and I believe I became

sensitive to my duty in this matter just as early as I did to the prevalence of suffering in the world. But down to my twentieth year, and even later still, I did not exert myself sufficiently to express the gratitude which was really in my heart. I valued too low the pleasure felt at receiving real proofs of gratitude. Often, too, shyness prevented me from expressing the gratitude that I really felt.

As a result of this experience with myself I refuse to think that there is as much ingratitude in the world as is commonly maintained: I have never interpreted the parable of the Ten Lepers to mean that only one was grateful. All the ten, surely, were grateful, but nine of them hurried home first, so as to greet their friends and attend to their business as soon as possible, intending to go to Jesus soon afterwards and thank him. But things turned out otherwise; they were kept at home longer than they meant to be, and in the meanwhile Jesus was put to death. One of them, however, had a disposition which made him act at once as his feelings bade him; he sought out the person who had helped him, and refreshed his soul with the assurance of his gratitude.

In the same way we ought all to make an effort to act on our first thoughts and let our unspoken

gratitude find expression. Then there will be more sunshine in the world, and more power to work for what is good. But as concerns ourselves we must all of us take care not to adopt as part of our theory of life all people's bitter sayings about the ingratitude in the world. A great deal of water is flowing underground which never comes up as a spring. In that thought we may find comfort. But we ourselves must try to be the water which does find its way up ; we must become a spring at which men can quench their thirst for gratitude.

Influence.

One other thing stirs me when I look back at my youthful days, viz. the fact that so many people gave me something or were something to me without knowing it. Such people, with whom I have, perhaps, never exchanged a word, yes, and others about whom I have merely heard things by report, have had a decisive influence upon me ; they entered into my life and became powers within me. Much that I should otherwise not have felt so clearly or done so effectively was felt or done as it was, because I stand, as it were, under the sway of these people. Hence I always think that we all live, spiritually, by what others have given

us in the significant hours of our life. These significant hours do not announce themselves as coming, but arrive unexpected. Nor do they make a great show of themselves; they pass almost unperceived. Often, indeed, their significance comes home to us first as we look back, just as the beauty of a piece of music or of a landscape often strikes us first in our recollection of it. Much that has become our own in gentleness, modesty, kindness, willingness to forgive, in veracity, loyalty, resignation under suffering, we owe to people in whom we have seen or experienced these virtues at work, sometimes in a great matter, sometimes in a small. A thought which had become act sprang into us like a spark, and lighted a new flame within us.

I do not believe that we can put into anyone ideas which are not in him already. As a rule there are in everyone all sorts of good ideas, ready like tinder. But much of this tinder catches fire, or catches it successfully, only when it meets some flame or spark from outside, *i.e.* from some other person. Often, too, our own light goes out, and is rekindled by some experience we go through with a fellow-man. Thus we have each of us cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flames within us. If we had before us those who have thus been a blessing

to us, and could tell them how it came about, they would be amazed to learn what passed over from their life into ours.

Similarly, not one of us knows what effect his life produces, and what he gives to others; that is hidden from us and must remain so, though we are often allowed to see some little fraction of it, so that we may not lose courage. The way in which power works is a mystery.

Mutual Knowledge.

After all, is there not much more mystery in the relations of man to man than we generally recognise? None of us can truly assert that he really knows someone else, even if he has lived with him for years. Of that which constitutes our inner life we can impart even to those most intimate with us only fragments; the whole of it we cannot give, nor would they be able to comprehend it. We wander through life together in a semi-darkness in which none of us can distinguish exactly the features of his neighbour; only from time to time, through some experience that we have of our companion, or through some remark that he passes he stands for a moment close to us, as though illumined by a flash of lightning. Then we see him

as he really is. After that we again walk on together in the darkness, perhaps for a long time, and try in vain to make out our fellow-traveller's features.

To this fact, that we are each a secret to the other, we have to reconcile ourselves. To know one another cannot mean to know everything about each other; it means to feel mutual affection and confidence, and to believe in one another. A man must not try to force his way into the personality of another. To analyse others—unless it be to help back to a sound mind someone who is in spiritual or intellectual confusion—is a rude commencement, for there is a modesty of the soul which we must recognise, just as we do that of the body. The soul, too, has its clothing of which we must not deprive it, and no one has a right to say to another: "Because we belong to each other as we do, I have a right to know all your thoughts." Not even a mother may treat her child in that way. All demands of that sort are foolish and unwholesome. In this matter giving is the only valuable process; it is only giving that stimulates. Impart as much as you can of your spiritual being to those who are on the road with you, and accept as something precious what comes back to you from them.

It was perhaps a result of my inherited reserve that from my youth up reverence for the personality of others was to me something natural and a matter of course. Since then I have become more and more confirmed in this view through seeing how much sorrow, pain, and mutual estrangement come from people claiming the right to read the souls of others, as they might a book that belonged to them, and from wishing to know and understand where they ought to believe. We must all beware of reproaching those we love with want of confidence in us if they are not always ready to let us look into all the corners of their heart. We might almost say that the better we get to know each other, the more mystery we see in each other. Only those who respect the personality of others can be of real use to them.

I think, therefore, that no one should compel himself to show to others more of his inner life than he feels it natural to show. We can do no more than let others judge for themselves what we inwardly and really are, and do the same ourselves with them. The one essential thing is that we strive to have light in ourselves. Our strivings will be recognised by others, and when people have light in themselves, it will shine out from them. Then we get to know each other as we walk together

in the darkness, without needing to pass our hands over each other's faces, or to intrude into each other's hearts.

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Reserve v. Freedom.

If reverence for the inner personality of others was a matter of course with me from my childhood up, I had, on the other hand, much trouble in answering the question how far in our ordinary intercourse with others we should hold ourselves back, and how far we should freely give ourselves. The two tendencies struggled within me, but up to the last year of my time at the Gymnasium the former was the stronger. My shyness held me back from showing as much interest in others as I really felt, and from giving them as much help and service as inward impulse bade; and in this habit of mind I was strengthened by my aunt's bringing up at Mülhausen. She impressed me deeply with the idea that reserve is of the essence of good breeding. Every kind of "forwardness" I ought (she said) to learn to regard as a very serious fault, and I did make genuine efforts to avoid it. As time went

on, however, I ventured to emancipate myself somewhat from these rules about well-bred reserve. They seemed to me to be like the rules of harmony, which are, indeed, universally valid, but are often swept aside by the living stream of music. I realised more and more clearly how many opportunities of doing good we miss, if we let ourselves be slavishly hemmed in by the reserve which the conventional rules of social intercourse expect us to practise.

We must, indeed, take care to be tactful, and not mix ourselves up uninvited in other people's business. On the other hand we must not forget the danger lurking in the reserve which our practical daily life forces on us. We cannot possibly let ourselves get frozen into regarding everyone we do not know as an absolute stranger. No man is ever completely and permanently a stranger to his fellow-man. Man belongs to man. Man has claims on man. Circumstances great or small may arise which make impossible the aloofness which we have to practise in daily life, and bring us into active relations with each other, as men to men. The law of reserve is condemned to be broken down by the claims of the heart, and thus we all get into a position where we must step outside our aloofness, and to one of our fellow-men become ourselves a

man. Too often we let the opportunity slip by, because the prevailing views about good breeding, politeness, and tact have robbed us of our power of independent action. Then we fail to give to others what we should like to give them, and what they long to have. Our human atmosphere is much colder than it need be, because we do not venture to give ourselves to others as heartily as our feelings bid us.

I had the good fortune, when I was young, to meet a few people who, for all the respect they paid to current rules about social behaviour, had yet preserved their power of independent action. When I saw what they thus did for others, I gained courage enough to try to make my actions as natural and hearty as my feelings were, and the experience thus gained has prevented me from ever again bowing my neck under the rule of reserve. Now I try as well as I can to reconcile the politeness of the heart with that of society, though whether I always succeed I cannot tell. I can no more lay down rules for producing such reconciliation than I can say when a musician must bow to the accepted rule of harmony, and when he may surrender himself to the spirit of music which stands outside and above all rules. But I have managed to learn this: that a defiance of current rules, if

dictated by the heart and made of deliberate purpose, is seldom taken by others to be thoughtless forwardness.

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From Enthusiasm to "Ripeness."

The ideas which determine our character and life are implanted in mysterious fashion. When we are leaving childhood behind us, they begin to shoot out. When we are seized by youth's enthusiasm for the good and the true, they burst into flower, and the fruit begins to set. In the development which follows the one really important thing is—how much there still remains of the fruit, the buds of which were put out in its spring-time by the tree of our life.

The conviction that in after life we must struggle to remain thinking as freely and feeling as deeply as we did in our youth, has accompanied me on my road through life as a faithful adviser. Instinctively I have taken care not to become what is generally understood by the term, a man of ripe experience (ein reifer Mensch).

The epithet "ripe" applied to persons always did, and does still, convey to me the idea of something

depressing. I hear with it, like musical discords, the words, impoverishment, stunted growth, blunted feelings. What we are usually invited to contemplate as "ripeness" in a man is the resigning of ourselves to an almost exclusive use of the reason. One acquires it by copying others and getting rid, one by one, of the thoughts and convictions which were dear in the days of one's youth. We believed once in the victory of truth; but we do not now. We believed in our fellow-men; we do not now. We believed in goodness; we do not now. We were zealous for justice; but we are not so now. We trusted in the power of kindness and peaceableness; we do not now. We were capable of enthusiasm; but we are not so now. To get through the shoals and storms of life more easily we have lightened our craft, throwing overboard what we thought could be spared. But it was really our stock of food and drink of which we deprived ourselves; our craft is now easier to manage, but we ourselves are in a decline.

I listened, in my youth, to conversations between grown-up people through which there breathed a tone of sorrowful regret which oppressed the heart. The speakers looked back at the idealism and capacity for enthusiasm of their youth as something precious to which they ought to have held

fast, and yet at the same time they regarded it as almost a law of nature that no one should be able to do so. This woke in me a dread of having ever, even once, to look back on my own past with such a feeling; I resolved never to let myself become subject to this tragic domination of mere reason, and what I thus vowed in almost boyish defiance I have tried to carry out.

Idealism.

Grown-up people reconcile themselves too willingly to a supposed duty of preparing young ones for the time when they will regard as illusion what now is an inspiration to heart and mind. Deeper experience of life, however, advises their inexperience differently. It exhorts them to hold fast, their whole life through, to the thoughts which inspire them. It is through the idealism of youth that man catches sight of truth, and in that idealism he possesses a wealth which he must never exchange for anything else. We must all be prepared to find that life tries to take from us our belief in the good and the true, and our enthusiasm for them, but we need not surrender them. That ideals, when they are brought into contact with reality, are usually crushed by facts does not mean that they are bound from the

very beginning to capitulate to the facts, but merely that our ideals are not strong enough; and they are not strong enough because they are not pure and strong and stable enough in ourselves.

The power of ideals is incalculable. We see no power in a drop of water. But let it get into a crack in the rock and be turned to ice, and it splits the rock; turned into steam, it drives the pistons of the most powerful engines. Something has happened to it which makes active and effective the power that is latent in it.

So it is with ideals. Ideals are thoughts. So long as they exist merely as thoughts, the power latent in them remains ineffective, however great the enthusiasm, and however strong the conviction with which the thought is held. Their power only becomes effective when they are taken up into some refined human personality.

The ripeness, then, that our development must aim at is one which makes us simpler, more truthful, purer, more peace-loving, meeker, kinder, more sympathetic. That is the only way in which we are to sober down with age. That is the process in which the soft iron of youthful idealism hardens into the steel of a full-grown idealism which can never be lost.

The most valuable knowledge we can have is how to deal with disappointments. All acts and facts are a product of spiritual power, the successful ones of power which is strong enough ; the unsuccessful ones of power which is too weak. Does my behaviour in respect of love effect nothing ? That is because there is not enough love in me. Am I powerless against the untruthfulness and the lies which have their being all around me ? The reason is that I myself am not truthful enough. Have I to watch dislike and illwill carrying on their sad game ? That means that I myself have not yet completely laid aside small-mindedness and envy. Is my love of peace misunderstood and scorned ? That means that I am not yet sufficiently peace-loving.

The great secret of success is to go through life as a man who never gets used up. That is possible for him who never argues and strives with men and facts, but in all experiences retires upon himself, and looks for the ultimate cause of things in himself.

No one who is always striving to refine his character can ever be robbed of his idealism, for he experiences in himself the power of the ideas of the good and the true. When he sees far too little of the external results at which he is aiming,

he knows nevertheless that he is producing as much as his character allows ; it is only that success has not yet begun, or that it is as yet hidden from him. Where there is power, there some result or other is produced. No ray of sunlight is ever lost, but the green which it wakes into existence needs time to sprout, and it is not always granted to the sower to live to see the harvest. All work that is worth anything is done in faith.

The knowledge of life, therefore, which we grown-ups have to pass on to the younger generation will not be expressed thus : " Reality will soon give way before your ideals," but " Grow into your ideals, so that life can never rob you of them." If all of us could become what we were at fourteen, what a different place the world would be !

As one who tries to remain youthful in his thinking and feeling, I have struggled against facts and experience on behalf of belief in the good and the true. At the present time when violence, clothed in life, dominates the world more cruelly than it ever has before, I still remain convinced that truth, love, peaceableness, meekness, and kindness are the violence which can master all other violence. The world will be theirs as soon as ever a sufficient number of men with purity of heart, with strength, and with perseverance think and live out the

thoughts of love and truth, of meekness and peaceableness.

All ordinary violence produces its own limitations, for it calls forth an answering violence which sooner or later becomes its equal or its superior. But kindness works simply and perseveringly; it produces no strained relations which prejudice its working; strained relations which already exist it relaxes. Mistrust and misunderstanding it puts to flight, and it strengthens itself by calling forth answering kindness. Hence it is the furthest-reaching and the most effective of all forces.

All the kindness which a man puts out into the world works on the heart and the thoughts of mankind, but we are so foolishly indifferent that we are never in earnest in the matter of kindness. We want to topple a great load over, and yet will not avail ourselves of a lever which would multiply our power a hundred-fold.

There is an unmeasured depth of truth in that strange saying of Jesus: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (St. Matt. v, 5).

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